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In re Application of : DECISION ON PETITION  
TRIFONI, et al. :  
Serial No.: 10/517,982 :  
PCT No.: PCT/EP03/06327 : UNDER 37 CFR 1.47(a)  
Int. Filing Date: 16 June 2003 :  
Priority Date: 17 June 2002 :  
Atty Docket No.: 267.184 :  
For: MEMBRANE ELECTROCHEMICAL :  
GENERATOR :

This decision is issued in response to applicant's "Renewed Petition Under Rule 37 CFR 1.47(a)" filed 10 May 2006 to accept the application without the signatures of joint inventors, Eduardo Trifoni and Matteo Lenardon.

BACKGROUND

On 16 June 2003, applicant filed international application PCT/EP03/06327 which claimed priority to a previous application filed 17 June 2002. Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.495, the deadline for payment of the basic national fee in the United States was to expire 30 months from the priority date, 17 December 2004.

On 13 December 2004, applicant filed a transmittal letter for entry into the national stage in the United States, which was accompanied by the requisite basic national fee as required by 35 U.S.C. 371(c)(1); a copy of the international application; a preliminary amendment; and an Information Disclosure Statement. In addition, applicant filed combined declaration and power of attorney executed by seven of the nine inventors listed on the published international application.

On 09 June 2005, applicant filed a petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a) to accept the application without the signatures of joint inventors Eduardo Trifoni and Matteo Lenardon.

On 13 July 2005, applicant was mailed a "Notification of Missing Requirements under 35 U.S.C. 371" (Form PCT/DO/EO/905) informing applicant of the need to provide an oath or declaration of the inventors, in compliance with 37 CFR 1.497(a) and (b), identifying the application by the International application number and international filing date. Applicant was afforded two months to file the proper reply and informed that this period could be extended pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a).

In a Decision dated 23 February 2006, applicant's petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a) was dismissed without prejudice.

On 10 May 2006, applicant filed a renewed petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a) to accept the application without the signatures of joint inventors Eduardo Trifoni and Matteo Lenardon.

### DISCUSSION

A petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a) must be accompanied by (1) the fee under 37 CFR 1.17(g), (2) factual proof that the missing joint investor refuses to execute the application or cannot be reached after diligent effort, (3) a statement of the last known address of the missing inventor, and (4) an oath or declaration by each 37 CFR 1.47(a) applicant on his or her own behalf and on behalf of the non-signing joint inventor. Applicant has satisfied items (1), (3) and (4).

Regarding item (2) above, petitioner states that Eduardo Trifoni and Matteo Lenardon have refused to sign the application. Section 409.03(d) of the MPEP, **Proof of Unavailability or Refusal**, states, in part:

Where a refusal of the inventor to sign the application papers is alleged, the circumstances of the presentation of the application papers and of the refusal must be specified in a statement of facts by the person who presented the inventor with the application papers and/or to whom the refusal was made. Statements by a party not present when an oral refusal is made will not be accepted.

Proof that a bona fide attempt was made to present a copy of the application papers (specification, including claims, drawings, and oath or declaration) to the nonsigning inventor for signature, but the inventor refused to accept delivery of the papers or expressly stated that the application papers should not be sent, may be sufficient. When there is an express oral refusal, that fact along with the time and place of the refusal must be stated in the statement of facts. When there is an express written refusal, a copy of the document evidencing that refusal must be made part of the statement of facts. The document may be redacted to remove material not related to the inventor's reasons for refusal.

When it is concluded by the 37 CFR 1.47 applicant that a nonsigning inventor's conduct constitutes a refusal, all facts upon which that conclusion is based should be stated in the statement of facts in support of the petition or directly in the petition. If there is documentary evidence to support facts alleged in the petition or in any statement of facts, such evidence should be submitted. Whenever a nonsigning inventor gives a reason for refusing to sign the application oath or declaration, that reason should be stated in the petition.

A. Eduardo Trifoni

Petitioner states that Eduardo Trifoni has refused to sign the application. A review of the present petition reveals that applicant has not shown that a bona fide attempt was made to present the application papers, including the specification, claims, drawings, and oath/declaration to Eduardo Trifoni. The declaration of Annie Tuosto states that she mailed a copy of the application and an assignment document to Mr. Trifoni on 08 July 2004. As stated in the previous decision, the application papers were mailed prior to applicant entering the national stage in the United States and do not appear to have contained a declaration for the purposes of entering the national stage in the United States but merely an assignment document. Further, it appears from Eduardo Trifoni's letter dated 27 November 2004 that he is refusing to execute the assignment. The refusal to sign the assignment is not a refusal to execute the application. As detailed above, the inventors must be presented with an oath or declaration for execution.

B. Matteo Lenardon

Petitioner states that Matteo Lenardon has refused to sign the application. A review of the present petition reveals that applicant has shown that a bona fide attempt was made to present the application papers, including the specification, claims, drawings, and oath/declaration to Matteo Lenardon. The declaration of Annie Tuosto states that she mailed a copy of the application and an assignment document to Mr. Lenardon on 09 September 2004. As stated in previous decision, the application papers were mailed prior to applicant entering the national stage in the United States and do not appear to have contained a declaration for the purposes of entering the national stage in the United States. As detailed above, the inventors must be presented with an oath or declaration for execution. Further, it is unclear whether Matteo Lenardon was refusing to execute the application or the assignment. It is noted that a complete translation of the 09 September 2004 has not been provided.

As stated above, where a refusal of the inventor to sign the application papers is alleged, a statement of facts is needed from a person having first hand knowledge of the facts that a complete copy of the application papers (specification, claims, drawings and oath/declaration) were sent to Eduardo Trifoni and Matteo Lenardon, and when such papers were sent. In addition, copies of documentary evidence such as a certified mail return receipt, cover letter of instruction, telegrams, etc., should be supplied with the declaration.

In light of the above, it is not possible to grant applicant's petition at this time.

**CONCLUSION**

For the reasons stated above, applicant's petition under 37 CFR 1.47(a) is **DISMISSED**.

Any reconsideration on the merits of this petition must be filed within **TWO (2)** MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Any reconsideration request should include a

cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition Under 37 CFR 1.47(a)." Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Any further correspondence with respect to this matter should be directed to Mail Stop PCT, Commissioner for Patents, Office of PCT Legal Administration, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, with the contents of the letter marked to the attention of the Office of PCT Legal Administration.

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